

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: February 27, 2003

Project Number:

Location: Southern NH Regional Planning Commission
Manchester, NH

Re: **Second Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting for the
Salem to Concord Bikeway Feasibility Study**

Attendees:

Ram Maddali made introductions. Discussed and asked for comments on minutes and notes for 1/23/03 meeting. Minutes are posted on the NHDOT web site and draft report will be posted as well as future meeting minutes. Ram also thanked members of the CAC for their input on the program format. The meetings were well received in large part because of the selected format. Also, thanks to those who attended the meetings. Public Information and Comments from the meetings was passed around in a folder. Copies will be made upon request. Minutes of the meetings have been emailed it was agreed to continue this method of distribution.

Domenic Ciavarro of Rizzo Associates gave a quick synopsis of the proposed options.

I-93 Bikeway between Exit 2 and Exit 5 with references to maps.

Input on this option included: Noisy, Long steep grades, poor connections, not a family facility, available funding, good offset from traveled way, sound barrier.

On road options comments included: will serve only experienced riders, improvements will be expensive, will have difficult grades, little current use, good access to business.

Rail Option is the safest route. It will have good connections and be the best mitigation for vehicle trips. The alignment will permit modest grades, less expensive to improve. Anticipate higher bike pedestrian usage than other options.

Paul Smith, Review of Rail Trail with some new information. On road element at Harvey Rd in Manchester and a shared use connection to Perimeter Road then return to rail trail. At Canal Street there will be a series of difficult turns at Granite Street (in downtown). Rail Trail can make connection to other trails proposed and existing at the Merrimac River.

Ron Johnson, City of Manchester, Division of Parks and Recreation discussed the status of the Heritage Trail. Route through the Mill Yard and north through several us agreements with SNH University and YDC. Grant for Manchester Law. Heritage Trail on road to east

Paul Smith, Concord Connection to Concord and Portsmouth Rail Corridor. Three options are Bow Lane, through White Sands Conservation Area, Garvin Falls Road to Manchester Street, or a 3 span bridge to connect with Hall Street near the Blue Seal Feed complex. The Concord and Portsmouth section would require 3 other new structures. At the Allenstown Canal (mill chase), Suncook River, Soucook River. Although the rail structures have been removed the bridge abutments are intact at these locations. Rizzo is preparing preliminary cost analysis for these locations.

From Depot Street in Manchester to the Hooksett Court Building the mileage between the two rail corridors is 7 to 8 miles. Traffic is spread out, speeds are slower if one is to consider on road connection. How to connect? Martin's Ferry Road, Route 3, River Road has sidewalks after Amoskeag and already sees heavy pedestrian use.

A Concord connection at Hall Street is a good tie-in to the Bow Park-n-Ride and proximity to the I-89 Bike Path. Hall Street is a good road for developing bike/ped facilities, a recreation Field on Hall Street, connection to Water Street and Main Street.

Guilford is reluctant to consider granting an easement (insurance issues). Bedford Street is a possibility, but after Amoskeag Bridge the rail corridor is again an issue. Ron Johnson said next to the RR ROW not in their plan.

Tom J. discussed a phone call received and difficulties in obtaining easement from individuals opposed to Bike-Ped only (Non-motorized) Rail Trail.

In Windham consideration for possible trail connection on the long abandoned Worcester, Nashua and Portland Rail corridor that intersects the Manchester and Lawrence corridor at Windham Depot. What is the corridor west of I-93 being used for? Windham said that they understood the NHDOT would consider oversized culverts that could be used to get trail under I-93. NHDOT concern that due to width of existing highway let alone proposed widening that this would create a long unlit tunnel. Reference was made to culvert placed on abandoned rail corridor under NH 101 which had a grate over the path between the East bound and West bound lanes. Tom J. pointed out that this application on I-93 would conflict with Light Rail concept in median. Could a 10x10 or 10x12 culvert be installed?

Lowell road connection, some work is needed to upgrade for shared use. Beacon Hill was cut off by I-93, reconnect directly to rail corridor was suggested.

It was pointed out to committee that Route 3 from Concord through Pembroke and Allenstown was one of the earliest BikePed projects and it included shoulders and sidewalk improvements.

Kerrie Diers from Pembroke stated that Town is considering Heritage Trail. That there is interest growing in trails. Program is in early stages of development, but Town has already picked up some parcels. They like the idea of improvements to Concord-Portsmouth corridor. The connection between the Suncook Recreation Fields and the

White Sands area. Some of the corridor in its unimproved state is already in use even with resolution of property issues. Potential for developing plans for this corridor is good.

Need to balance all the factors including cost.
What are the criteria to base the evaluation?

Ansel Sanborn – Project Purpose and Need. Put in place a vision.

4 Hurdles for project to clear:

- 1) Meet need
- 2) Technical
- 3) Work for both Pedestrian and bike, (all non-motorized trips), Connections within and between communities, work trips and non-work trips.
- 4) Is it affordable, cost effective, have funding sources?

I-93 money question, this is a big ticket; adding bikeped money is a political issue. TE/CMAQ, take one car off the road. This feasibility study presents an opportunity for communities and RPC's to apply for TE/CMAQ grants, joint applications that may have more weight in the review process.

Environmental, is the project compatible with natural and built environments.

Public Acceptance, make it an asset to the community.

A Criteria Matrix:

Technical need

Can afford

Compatible to

Will it win public acceptance

Safety

Feasibility Study – Technical support for applications

Make the Case

People that are opposed are not at this meeting. They will present obstacles at future steps in the project development process.

Desire to come up with implementation planning, identification of funding sources. Timing for TE/CMAQ applications is very good. Informative brochures were available and are available from NHDOT Bureau of Transportation Planning. Application due date is July 31, 2003. May, June, July time for application preparation. If this deadline is missed the next round is in 2 years.

It was suggested that adding the bike path in the I-93 widening would impact an additional 8 acres. It is thought that the cost attributed to the Salem to Londonderry I-93 Bike Path is estimated to be about \$2.8 Million.

Important to get appointed/elected officials (they are needed to make the bikeway a reality) to attend public meetings. This project needs the widest audience possible. Note: Queen City Trail Alliance already making a presentation to the City government.

On Road option

Rizzo suggests a cost per Linear Foot of \$ 75.00 Linear Foot for 4' shoulders

Or \$175.00 Linear Foot curbs and sidewalks

Only construction cost does not include ROW or utility costs.

15 miles x 5280 x \$175 = \$15-16 million.

Rail Trail

12' Paved, 3' crushed stone shoulders

10" base, 18' wide estimated cost \$47.00 linear foot.

21.5 miles Salem to Manchester Airport, less .8 miles in Derry and 1.5 miles.

@ 19 miles x 5280 x \$47 = \$4.75 million.

Construction only, does not include drainage. Does not include at grade crossings with highways and streets (37)

Treatment for crossings would be similar to a mid-block crosswalk, with advanced warning signs.

Signalization will be necessary at the Queen City Avenue crossing. Alternative would be expensive grade separation project. Prefab bridge structures for Suncook, Soucook and the Merrimack are estimated at \$ 1.5 million.

Town of Derry stated that they did the drainage on 3 miles of trail for \$10,000.00.

Need many sources of funding. Committee members concerned about possible distraction from obtaining I-93 money for Bikeway construction. It is reported that Federal Highway money has been used in other states for Bike/Ped improvements.

Salem is deficient in crosswalk installations.

Cost of Maintenance must be added to Criteria. Can town(s) absorb these costs? Derry estimate \$10,000-\$15,000 part time trail/transfer station clean up charge.

DRED costs for trail maintenance in Franconia Notch includes blowing the leaves off the trail twice a day in the fall. Every spring the trail has to be swept. There are 2 full time employees assigned to 6-mile trail.

Who is responsible for Maintenance?

Maurice Pillote suggested the Arlington-Bedford MA trail be considered for Maintenance information. Rail Trail Conservatory puts out information. Surface type will have an impact on maintenance costs. Gravel exposure to elements is source of potential for erosion.

Handicap accessibility may impact surface type decision.

Ownership, Responsibility – How is it built?

Recreation Value

Recreation Plan Criteria

Meeting the goals of SCORP

Greenways – linkage. How does this tie in with individual town green/open space plans. Quality of life, high utilization.

Corporate Funding – construction, maintenance, (use corporation money as match).

Hotels possible corporate source of funds and support. Economic development.

Statewide trail to Vermont

Bi-state Rail Study must be accounted for.

Manchester Airport did rail study, result rail application not feasible. Consider maintaining a 30 feet easement for possible rail return.

Transportation Funds are a Finite Resource.

Consensus, no need to convene CAC, electronic information, contact members via email.

Public meetings are schedule for: April 1, 2003 at the Windham Town Hall, 7:00 PM
 April 3, 2003 at the Pembroke Town Hall, 7:00 PM

Final Meeting of Citizens Advisory Committee: April 15, 2003 at SNHRPC, 6:30 PM